# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1663**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 16)**

**Mr S J F Marais (DA) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) Given the vaccination roll-out programme and the announcement of vaccinations based on age, by what date does he envisage will vaccinations to multiple disabled persons be offered, as they often have comorbidities making them the most vulnerable members of society to contract the COVID-19 virus;

(2) what are the reasons that they will not be vaccinated at the same time as their parents and caregivers, since they are often cared for by their parents who are older than 60 years;

(3) what are the full, relevant details of the reasons that their exposure to COVID-19 infection and the risk of them dying is not treated as a high priority in terms of the policies on the roll-out of the vaccine by his department?

###### NW1871E

**REPLY:**

1. People with disabilities who live in care homes of any description are vaccinated through the outreach programmes through the ‘congregate settings’ programme. People who are bedridden can, where it is possible, be visited and vaccinated at home. Insured patients should arrange this with their medical aids. For public patients this will depend on the capacity of the provincial health department.
2. The Electronic Vaccine Distribution System (EVDS) is programmed to schedule vaccinations in age bands as determined by the government from time to time (after advice from various Ministerial Advisory and other committees).
3. Vaccination of every person in South Africa is considered important and urgent. The reality is that the capacity of the combined public and private health services to vaccinate people is limited. There are many competing priorities for vaccination and these priorities are addressed within the capacity of the system and the availability of vaccine. There is no objective way to choose one person’s health needs above another, so the focus has started with the groups where the greatest concentration of risk has been identified and that is in the age group over 60 years. The rollout to others is as fast as the vaccine and the services can manage.

END.